



Frits Thaulow

1847-1906

The snowy bench

Oil on canvas signed lower right

Dimensions : 46,5 x 56 cm

Dimensions : 18.11 x 22.05 inch

Origin : M. Knoedler & Co, New York, New York, ca. 1910.

Acquired directly from the above company. Private collection, New England, from family to present owner.



Dimensions with frame : 60,5 x 70 cm
Dimensions with frame : 23.62 x 27.56 inch

Biography

Frits Thaulow was a Norwegian painter who was first inspired by marine painting. He started his apprenticeship at the Academy of Fine Art in Copenhagen in 1870 and followed the class of Sorensen - the unmissable master of marine - during two years. He went to Karlsruhe in Germany on the next two winters, to take lessons with Hans Gude who was considered to be the best German specialist of landscape and marine scenes.

In 1875, Frits Thaulow left Norway to settle in Paris for four years. There he presented his paintings of sea coasts and marine at the Salon of French Artists. He received a mixed reception but this was the occasion for him to acquire good knowledge of Naturalist painting. He particularly admired the work of Jules Bastien-Lepage, one of the masters of this artistic movement at this time.

During the Autumn 1879, Thaulow travelled to Skagen in Denmark and settled there three years. He realized numerous paintings and pastels. Combined with his knowledge acquired in Paris, he offered a personal interpretation of landscape, felt innovative by Scandinavian artists. He specialized in winter scenes and combined his personal impressions of Norwegian landscape to create a new form of impressionist landscape. His art works were very appreciated by Norwegian people and also the press who praised his virtuosity and the poetry of his paintings. Thaulow is still considered today as the most important Norwegian impressionist artist.

In 1889, he took part in the Universal Exhibition where he showed some very delicate works noted by Monet and Rodin who will become his friend. In 1890, he was by the founders of the Salon du Champ de Mars and one of the most liked exhibitors. That is how he settled in France in 1892 with many studios in Camiers, Etaples-sur-mer, Montreuil, Paris and Dieppe. At this time, he realized around fifty paintings a year and the most of them were exhibited at the Gallery Georges Petit.

Thanks to Mr Vidar Poulsson, the expert of the artist, we know that the present work is probably based on studies made during his stay at Petit-Appreville, a small village near Dieppe by the river Scie. Thaulow spent time in Dieppe from 1894 to 1898 and his first opportunity to paint winter landscapes there came in January 1895 when there was a large snowfall in the area.

There are various versions of the present work including one oil painting and at least five pastels. As the buildings in the distance are somewhat different in each work, this should indicate that they are partly to be considered compositions rather than exact depictions of a precise spot. One of the pastels is dated 1895.

Awarded numerous times, Frits Thaulow gained a gold medal at the Munich's Salon in 1890 and at the Vienna's one in 1894, before winning the Great Prize of Paris during the Universal Exhibition in 1900. He was named Knight of the Legion of Honor in 1889 and Officer in 1901.

He died prematurely at the age of 59 when he was at the height of his success.

Museums

Musée Rodin, Paris

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Musées des Beaux arts de Bordeaux, Rouen, Dieppe et Strasbourg

Oslo Museum, Norvège

Gothenburg Museum of Art, Suède

Lillehammer Art Museum, Norvège

Bibliography

Poulsson, Vidar Frits Thaulow: 1847-1906 (B.A. Mathisen. 1992)

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Gerarld Schurr: Les petits maîtres de la peinture tome 4, 1988